

The Story of The Refuge + Issue No. 5 + March 1, 2017



It's that time of year again!
Amplify Austin Day starts
tomorrow, March 2nd, at 6pm.
We have a matching \$20,000
donation, so our goal this year
is \$42K! [More >>>](#)



"We have to build the places.
We have to create the places.
That money has to be raised,"
says Brooke Crowder in
*Solutions: What Texas can do
to help child sex-trafficking
victims*, in Texas Tribune's
investigative series, *SOLD
OUT: How the crusade
against sex trafficking in
Texas has left child victims*

NO HOUSTON TOADS WERE HARMED IN THE MAKING OF THIS NEWSLETTER: How Jackson Walker Came to Represent The Refuge

By Brooke Crowder, Founder & Executive Director

We call it "The Story of The Refuge" because every story has many great characters who bring the story to life. And, for The Refuge, those characters in our story are made up of people and organizations who are working together to bring life to The Refuge Ranch. We are launching a series over the next few months highlighting the people and organizations who play a critical role at The Refuge. The bad news is that as there are so many, we will surely not be able to name them all. The good news is that as there are so many, we will get The Refuge built and thriving!

"My name is Ben Rhem and I don't know if you would ever need an environmental attorney, but I would like to offer my help and the services of my firm if you ever need it."

behind.

[More >>>](#)



EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS - The Refuge Ranch - February 2017 Vision Tour.

All of these photographs have been approved for public sharing. The imbedded GPS coordinates have been removed for security purposes. [More >>>](#)



See more media coverage of The Refuge Ranch. [More >>>](#)

I had just shared about The Refuge in the morning worship services at Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, one of our Church Partners. I thanked Ben and told him I would call him if we ever needed his counsel. Two weeks later, we found out that The Refuge Ranch was in the designated endangered Houston Toad habitat area and that little amphibian was a potential deal killer. I immediately called Ben.

That was June of 2015 and since that time, Ben and many of his colleagues at Jackson Walker have donated their time and expertise to help us at critical times in our development. If we'd had to hire attorneys for environmental, real estate, nonprofit and construction counsel over the past two years, it would have amounted to thousands of dollars being diverted from the construction of The Refuge. Instead, Ben, Frank Morphis, Sara McEown and Managing Partner, Wade Cooper, among a few others have graciously taken time to make sure The Refuge and ultimately the girls who will live there have the very best care and counsel necessary. It is an undeserved grace and generosity that reflects God's bigger plan for The Refuge.

No one person or organization can carry out our mission of providing long-term holistic services to deeply traumatized children. It takes an entire community. Jackson Walker and the people that make up this great firm are an example of every person doing just one thing, that which they are uniquely qualified to do to make The Refuge a reality.

Frankly, when Ben offered his services, I thought,

“I wish he was a nonprofit attorney.” But, of course, God knew better and what we would soon need and in the process He brought us many others from Jackson Walker who could help. Ben would tell you he has been the one blessed by being involved with The Refuge, and I am sure that is true, too. When we give, we truly do receive.

THE REFUGE RANCH: Construction Updates

- In order to start helping girls sooner, we will be phasing our vertical construction, focusing on space essential for providing services for at least 12 girls. This first phase of buildings will provide living space, as well as space for therapeutic services, education by the [UT Charter School](#) and medical care by [People's Community Clinic](#).
- We are wrapping up clearing and grading site work the first week of March, and will be moving right into installation of our utility infrastructure and base for our roadways in mid-March. The initial site work is scheduled to be completed by mid-May. This progress would not have been possible without generous monetary donations from many of you all, as well as exceptional help of in-kind services and materials from [Ranger Excavating](#), [Joe Bland Construction](#) and [Stansberry Engineering](#).
- [See photographs of The Refuge Ranch](#) from a February 2017 Vision Tour. Note: *All of these photographs have been approved for public sharing. The imbedded GPS*

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